

SHARE YOUR STORY EQUITY AND ACCESS FOR HIGH QUALITY CAREER PATHWAYS

Oklahoma State Department of Education New Skills for Youth Academic Affairs and Planning

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Best Practice

The Del Quest student mentoring program matches Del City High School Juniors with mentors from the business world for job shadowing, coaching of soft skills, and dining in a professional setting. The students spend three days and two overnight stays planning their futures and learning ways to reach their goals from legislators, business owners, school administrators, youth workers, and others. The community partners include the Del City Chamber of Commerce, church leaders, hotel owners, military personnel, school leaders, Rose State College, and local businesses.

Purpose

To help students develop a vision of themselves in a future career, and then to help them develop the soft skills and academic pathways that will lead them to success in a chosen career field.

Grade Level(s)

High School Juniors are selected for the Del Quest program each year. The relationships between mentors and mentees last for years to come.

Expected Results

Students learn how to greet, introduce themselves, and present business cards in a professional setting. They visit the State Capitol to learn aspects of state government. They are led through many activities to develop leadership skills, financial responsibility, effective resumes, and to leave a responsible digital footprint should future employers look into their social media accounts.

Evidence of Success

Surveys from students and business partners and feedback given to the Chamber Board are good

indicators of success and also good indicators of ways to improve the program each year. The greatest measures of success are in the continued relationships between the mentors and the students, the college admissions, the Career Tech admissions, and the successful employments that we hear about from our Del Quest students.

Training

We have done the Del Quest mentoring program for many years with continued participation by several key leaders. The training is more a continued practice of planning and improving on the previous year's events.

Staff Needed

Mentors for 1-1 mentoring and job shadowing, and it helps if the mentor is in a career that the student is interested in. Three teen-magnet adults to lead various leadership and career skill development activities. Business partners to provide financial support for hotel rooms, business cards, food, shirts, and supplies for the learning activities. Chamber of Commerce leaders who love kids, and can plan teen-friendly experiences for them.

Resources Needed

Businesses to partner with the Chamber of Commerce and school district to provide financial support for the items mentioned above.

Contact Person(s)

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Research

- 59 percent of mentored teenagers earn better grades.
- 27 percent of mentored youth are less likely to begin using alcohol.
- 52 percent of mentored youth are less likely to skip school.
- Youth with mentors have increased likelihood of going to college, better attitudes toward school, increased social and emotional development, and improved self-esteem.

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